



## Grapevine's Oldest Restaurant Celebrates **40 YEARS OF FUN**

*Willhoite's kicks-off 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary with January 13 celebration*

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GRAPEVINE, TX – JANUARY 4, 2021 – Willhoite's Restaurant, Grapevine's oldest operating restaurant, will mark four decades in business January 17, 2021. The family-owned restaurant will commemorate the milestone with a birthday bash January 13 and year-long celebratory campaign.

Known for its all-you-can-eat buffet (topped with a 1927 Model T Ford) and cover-free live entertainment, Willhoite's birthday celebration takes place January 13. The restaurant is offering \$4 lunch buffet (11AM-3PM) for adults, kids and seniors; complimentary food (including its famous boiled shrimp) and \$1.00 draft domestic beer during happy hour; free swag from the Fireball Whiskey Girls; and live entertainment by Darron Williams Duo.

Willhoite's is also celebrating its anniversary throughout 2021 with its **40 YEARS OF FUN** campaign that includes commemorative merchandise, contests, and social media posts with vintage photos and ads, fun trivia facts, and asking customers to share their stories and photos with #WillhoitesTurns40.

"Willhoite's may be turning 40, but we are proud to have stayed true to our roots – a fun, family restaurant with good food and reasonable prices. During the past 40 years, so many people have made memories here and celebrated momentous occasions, including reunions, anniversaries, weddings and in some cases, divorces," said co-owner Eric Parker. "Being an independent, family-owned restaurant during 2020 was certainly a challenge and we are very grateful to our loyal customers who continued to support us. We are proud to be one of the oldest businesses on Main Street and offer a glimpse into Grapevine's history."

Built in 1914, Willhoite's building first served as a dry goods store and was used for a time as a theater. In 1919, it was transformed into Willhoite Garage, the first full-service automotive station in Grapevine. Co-owner Phil Parker, a Grapevine native, purchased the building in 1980 and renovated it into Willhoite's Restaurant, restoring it as authentically as possible and keeping many aspects of the automotive shop – including its original brick walls and ceiling, a gas pump outside the front entrance and buffet station that is topped with a 1927 Model T Ford. Willhoite's exterior façade was restored in 2017 to its original appearance (based on photographs from the 1920s). In recognition of these efforts, Willhoite's received the 2019 Historic Preservation Award from the Grapevine Heritage Foundation.

As the first full-service restaurant in Grapevine, Willhoite's has been an active community partner from day one, including long-time members of the Grapevine Chamber of Commerce and Grapevine AMBUCS; sponsoring hundreds of community events; preparing daily lunches for Metroport Meals on Wheels since 2011; and hosting its annual Santa Cops Toy Drive with the Grapevine Police Department since 2001.

Willhoite's was inducted into the Grapevine Chamber of Commerce Business Hall of Fame in 1988. Phil Parker has received numerous honors, including being named the D.E. Box Citizen of the Year in 1995, Ted Willhoite Legacy Award in 2010, and GCISD Walk of Honor in 2020.

Willhoite's is open Monday through Saturday 11AM-2AM and Sunday 10AM-2AM. For more information, visit [www.willhoites.com](http://www.willhoites.com).

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